

How long to learn French

How to learn French fast? How long does it take to learn French? This is perhaps the most common question from students who wish to learn French.

How long a student needs to learn French will depend on several factors, with some taking a longer time than others. How long it finally takes will depend on several factors discussed below.

1 *Desired Proficiency level*

You can speak French or any other language at different proficiency levels. For instance, a French lawyer will use a much more sophisticated language (higher proficiency level) compared to a French child (lower proficiency level), although both of them are fluent in French! Consequently, if you simply wish to attain Beginner Level proficiency, 40-60 hours of learning will be sufficient. However, to reach an advanced level of proficiency, much more hours are needed!

2 *Available time for learning*

The time that you can set aside for learning French will definitely affect your progress. Hence, it will take a busy person a much longer time to learn French compared to someone with much time at his disposal.

3 *Gaps in between classes*

How long it takes to learn French also depends on gaps in between classes. Longer gaps better classes means more chance to forget what you have previously learned. Ideally, we recommend a maximum of 2 days gap in between lessons for maximum retention.

4 *Mother tongue influence*

Your mother tongue can deeply influence how long you take to learn French, especially French pronunciation. There is such a thing called mother tongue influence that mostly impact on your pronunciation of French words.

5 *Knowledge of another 'Romance' language*

Those who know another romance language (such as Italian and Spanish) will be able to learn French much faster than others. That is because many French words share a similar root with Italian and Spanish words, making it easier for Italians and Spaniards to correctly guess the meaning of those words, especially in written French.

6 *Knowledge of another foreign language*

If you already know a foreign language (especially another European language) with some similarities to the French language - such as having the same alphabet, sentence structure, vocabulary and grammar pattern - it is easier for you to make sense of French as a language.

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Here's an idea of the minimum hours required to attain different levels of French proficiency. We mention learning hours instead of time frame (weeks, months, etc) as it is more accurate. For instance, a student may take 4 hours/month (if she takes 1h lesson/week) or 56 hours/month (if she takes 14h lesson/week).

| Proficiency Level | CEFR | Others | French Faster |
|--------------------|------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Lower Beginner | A1 | 60 - 100 hours | 40 - 60 hours |
| Upper Beginner | A2 | 150 - 200 hours | 60 - 80 hours |
| Lower Intermediate | B1 | 350 - 400 hours | 80 - 120 hours |
| Upper Intermediate | B2 | 550 - 650 hours | 120 - 180 hours |
| Lower Advanced | C1 | 800 - 950 hours | 180 - 240 hours |
| Upper Advanced | C2 | > 1000 hours | 240 - 300 hours |

| Proficiency Level | A1 | A2 | B1 | B2 | C1 | C2 |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Starting as Zero Beginner | 60h | 80h | 120h | 180h | 240h | 300h |
| Starting as Lower Beginner A1 | - | 40h | 80h | 140h | 200h | 260h |
| Starting as Upper Beginner A2 | - | - | 60h | 120h | 180h | 240h |
| Starting as Lower Intermed B1 | - | - | - | 100h | 160h | 220h |
| Starting as Upper Intermed B2 | - | - | - | - | 120h | 180h |
| Starting as Lower Advanced C1 | - | - | - | - | - | 120h |

** Note: The above figures are an approximation and are for reference only!*

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